



# **From the May Fourth Movement to Communist Revolution: Guo Moruo and the Chinese Path to Communism (SUNY series in Chinese Philosophy and Culture)**

*Xiaoming Chen*

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*Using the life and work of influential Chinese writer Guo Moruo (1892–1978), reflects on China’s encounters with modernity, Communism, and capitalism.*

Why did China’s intellectuals turn to Communism? Reflecting on China’s encounters with modernity, Communism, and capitalism, Xiaoming Chen offers an explanation by using as a case study the life and work of influential Chinese writer Guo Moruo (1892–1978). Guo was dedicated to the May Fourth Movement, which sought to bring reform, republicanism, and modern Western ideas to China, but abandoned these ideals for Communism in the mid-1920s. While the hope of national salvation was a major factor in Guo’s conversion, Chen suggests other reasons, including a desire to save the whole world, a goal that was consistent with the traditional Confucian call to not only “manage the state” but also “harmonize the world.” Chen also argues that despite the collectivist and totalitarian outcome of the Chinese Communist movement, Marx’s initial promise of ultimate individual emancipation served as a major attraction to intellectuals like Guo, who came to view Marxist Communism as the most efficient and thorough way to fulfill their dream of individual freedom.

The book covers Guo’s intellectual and personal transitions, how the fight against the Confucian family system became the Marxist emancipation of the individual from capitalism, and how the Confucian struggle against sexual desire ceded to a struggle against material desires. The various combinations of Western and Confucian thought that Guo adopted ultimately led to a synthesis of Confucianism and Marxism-Leninism.

“While hundreds of books on Guo have been published in Chinese, only a few studies in English are exclusively on Guo’s life or works, among which, Xiaoming Chen’s monograph ... is, so far, the most important ... Chen’s study of the early years of Guo Moruo has made an important addition to the study of Guo as well as the path of Chinese intellectuals to ... Communism.” — *China Review International*

“This short book offers a different perspective on the role of Confucianism in the May Fourth period and shows in meticulous detail how commitment to Confucian values as well as critiques of it justified at least one intellectual’s turn to Marxism ... Those with a general interest in modern intellectual history or in Chinese history will enjoy reading this highly readable piece of scholarship.” — *The Historian*

“...Chen offers an explanation for the debate about Guo’s political integrity—whether he was a loyal communist or opportunist—because of the longevity of his career ... in modern Chinese history.” — *CHOICE*

“Now that the Communist revolution has proven to be a failure, it is worthwhile to reexamine the way in which intellectuals of the early twentieth century became enamored with Communism. This book is a good example of just such a meticulous review. It addresses a very valid and central question for historians of the twentieth century, particularly in Chinese history.” — Stephen Uhalley Jr., author of *A History of the Chinese Communist Party*

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**Bernadine Parker:**

People live in this new morning of lifestyle always attempt to and must have the time or they will get lot of stress from both day to day life and work. So , once we ask do people have extra time, we will say absolutely of course. People is human not a robot. Then we question again, what kind of activity have you got when the spare time coming to you of course your answer will certainly unlimited right. Then do you try this one, reading ebooks. It can be your alternative in spending your spare time, often the book you have read is actually From the May Fourth Movement to Communist Revolution: Guo Moruo and the Chinese Path to Communism (SUNY series in Chinese Philosophy and Culture).

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